

WASHINGTON, D. C., SUNDAY, JULY 28, 1907.

## Arlington, the City of the Dead

Plot Formerly Owned by Mrs. Robert E. Lee Now Largest and Most Beautiful of the National Cemeteries—How It Was Acquired by United States Government—Some Who Rest There.

Only a few minutes' ride from the hot city, across the river into Virginia, and one arrives at one of the most beautiful nature spots in the vicinity of the nation's capital—Arlington National Cemetery. It is the city of the honored dead, a "haunt of angels," thick with the stately granite and marble monuments, like jewels set in an emerald field, and as the visitor passes along the well-kept walks the conversation is hushed and low-voiced. Here many people for the first time in their lives—as they see the thick-stemmed graves—seem to realize something of the price the nation's children paid for liberty.

On one side of the cemetery as you enter through the upper gate is the officers' section; on the other the section for the privates. To the right, where the officers lie buried, the monuments are costly and pretentious, there are marble monoliths reaching toward the sky, porous cubes and crosses of granite, beautified by the hand of the sculptor, and at their foot often you shall see the pathetic mound half buried beneath a mass of clinging ivy. There are flowers here, always, brought by loving hands, and here and there about the silent field a drooping flag, its staff stuck in the turf, shows that some patriotic son or daughter remembers full well for what great cause the man who reposes here died. These flags are wondrously eloquent as, unfurled by the breeze, their folds hang limp, catching the glint of golden sunlight that struggles through the branches of the trees.

It is all so simple in its majesty! There are no laurels here; no orators to sound the praises of the men who gave their lives; even the inscriptions chiseled on the stones simply record the names of the men who lie here, the dates of birth and death. The striking history that lies between those dates the ambitious boyhood, the call to arms, the bugle cry upon the battlefield, the dreadful slaughter, and the sudden death—all this the visitor must fill in for himself. For these graves are the visible pages of history, each leaf a life and every word of it a heroic deed.

And across the way—more eloquently pathetic still—is the privates' section. For here lie an army of private soldiers. Only a little way the solemn stone cubes raise their heads above the velvet turf, but each one of them—and, oh, they lie so thick—represents a heart bereft; it is the heart of a man who has died. For as in life they formed according to military regulations, so do they now in death. The white stones, each bearing the name of the soldier who sleeps beneath, his rank, and the State from which he came, are set in orderly rows, uniform in distance each from the other, arrayed in order and marshaled like battalions.

**Bivouac of the Dead.**  
About the cemetery there are tablets set in the grass on which are inscribed verses from Col. Theodore O'Hara's "Bivouac of the Dead," and here, marking the death parade ground of the privates, is this titling couplet:

On Fame's eternal camping ground  
Their silent tents are pitched,  
And glory guards the solemn mound,  
The bivouac of the dead.

There is no such place as this where the thinking man may enjoy the luxury of contemplation. In the world it would be hard to find a more beautiful spot. Thick with gigantic forest trees and evergreen pines, set off with beautiful flowers, the land is rolling and uneven, so that each winding turn brings one to new delights. It slopes up to the banks of the Potomac to which the old mansion of Robert E. Lee still stands, and from thence one can see, far off, the faint-blue ridge of distant hills, the silver river there below with sluggish boats floating idly to sea, the magic shadows of the farther shore. Behind, amid the trees through which the odorous wind sighs now so gently, the lawns and meadow-ridges hang rich in flowers, though fortune's hand has wisely the landscape gardener has left nature alone as much as possible. Here and there the shrubbery is wild and tangled, though mostly the turf is cleaned and well-kept and trim, and the population of the beautiful Druidical amphitheater, as it is called, is the dead. For on Decoration Day, thousands gather beneath the green vines to hear spoken tributes to the dead. It is only on that day and on days when special monuments are dedicated that—

We have a view with which we pay the debt  
Of countless lives and reverence  
To those great men who fought and kept it ours.

How did this beautiful cemetery, so replete with historic monuments and tender memories, come to be? It is a beautiful tract of land is part of an original grant of 5,000 acres given by William Berkeley, governor of Virginia, to Robert Howson because he brought over a number of settlers into the Virginia colony. In 1662, the land was sold to the same year this Howson sold the land for six hogheads of tobacco to John Alexander. In December, 1773, the land had descended to Gerald Alexander, who sold the Arlington estate to John Parke Custis for 1,100 acres in Virginia currency.

This John Parke Custis was the son of Martha Washington by her first marriage. He was aide-de-camp to George Washington during the Revolutionary war, and when he died, of fever contracted at Yorktown, George Washington adopted his two children, George Washington Parke Custis and Eleanor Parke Custis. It was this adopted boy who inherited the Arlington estate and he resided here until his death in October, 1857. By his will he devised the Arlington House estate to his daughter, Mary Ann Randolph Lee, wife of Robert E. Lee, U. S. A., for her use during her lifetime, and on her death to his eldest grandson, George Washington Custis Lee to him and his heirs forever.

**Sold for Taxes.**  
By an executive order of the President of the United States, dated January 6, 1864, the entire tract of 1,100 acres was selected for "government use for war, military, charitable, and educational purposes" under the provisions of the acts of Congress of June 7, 1862, and February 6, 1863. By the same order it was directed that the property be sold to meet unpaid taxes due on it to the amount of \$20,000. This was done and the property was bid in for the United States government for \$20,000.

Mrs. Lee having died in 1873, legal proceedings were begun to set aside this

sale, the fight being instituted by George Washington Custis Lee, as heir under the will of his grandfather. The cause was heard in the United States Circuit Court, and the government lost. Appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States the lower court was sustained and so Congress by an act of March 3, 1883, appropriated the sum of \$100,000 for the purchase of the property, and thereupon George Washington Custis Lee died it, in consideration of the amount appropriated, to the United States.

It was in 1884 that, by an order of the Secretary of War, Arlington mansion and the grounds surrounding it, to the extent of 200 acres, were appropriated for a military cemetery, and it was specified that it was for the use of soldiers dying in the hospitals of the vicinity of Washington and Alexandria. Time after time the boundaries of the estate were enlarged, until now the entire tract inclosed embraces 481-3 acres. The state-of-mansion on the estate, where all visitors go and register, was begun in 1894, but it was not completed until after the war of 1892. It is said to be modeled after the temple of Paestrum, near Naples. Until 1884 it was the residence of Robert E. Lee. He was living here when he resigned his commission in the United States army to take up the cause of the

South, and to become its most conspicuous military leader, its idol, and its hero. The mansion has been preserved, as far as possible, in its original condition, though since it became a national cemetery much has been added to it. The six columns of the north portico of the old War Department building at Washington, and they were removed on the demolition of that building in 1873. The beautiful Temple of Fame, just east of the mansion, is supported by stone pillars taken from the corridors of the Patent Office after its partial destruction by fire in 1877.

It was Quartermaster General Montgomery Cunningham Meigs who first suggested the interment of soldiers in Arlington. There were forts on the heights in those days—Fort Whipple, Fort Mifflin, Fort Mifflin, and Fort Mifflin, which is now within the cemetery, an earthwork, which has been restored to its original form. On May 30, 1864, President Lincoln left the White House to visit the hospitals where the soldiers lay wounded. General Meigs accompanied him. Late in the afternoon they visited Arlington, where they found twelve dead soldiers, waiting to be carried to the Soldiers' Home for burial. Gen. Meigs directed that they be buried in Arlington, designating a spot near the mansion. There the first graves were dug, and as the sun set that night the first body—that of a Confederate soldier of a North Carolina regiment—was lowered into the grave. The next day General Meigs himself. His grave is one of the most striking in the cemetery. It is a huge but simple sarcophagus, inscribed:

Montgomery Cunningham Meigs,  
Brigadier General, United States Army,  
Quartermaster General,  
Soldier, Engineer, Architect, Scientist, Patriot,  
Born 1816. Died 1892.

Here, too, hard beside him, is buried his father, Josiah Meigs, born 1757, died 1827; his wife beside him, too, and there, on a little tomb, is a bronze effigy of a young soldier in a captain's uniform—his son, a sacrifice to the Union. The body lies there as his father saw it in the field of battle, and all about it on the bronze there are the imprint of horses' hoofs, a memento of the prints of the war horse ridden by the dead soldier's father, who was near him when he died.

**Thousands of Soldiers.**  
More than 13,000 soldiers lie in this graveyard beneath the trees, and every year the population of the city of the dead is increased by 200 bodies. Here is the monument to James Brewster Ricketts, major general, U. S. A., who served on the Canadian frontier, through the war with Mexico, fought in twenty-seven battles of the rebellion, was wounded five times, prisoner of war in Richmond, and who died from wounds received in the Shenandoah Valley while he was in command of the Sixth Corps. His monument is a tall plain shaft with his military record plainly told, and underneath:

He gave his honors to the world again,  
His blood shed to heaven,  
And sleeps in peace.

Would you seek more inspiration from the glory of the past? Then here is the grave of Philip Sheridan, the dashing cavalry leader, the beau ideal of soldiery. It rests in front of Arlington mansion, a low shaft of marble granite with a panel in bronze, bearing his noble head in bas-relief, and simply his name and date of death. That breathes history enough!

This is the eastern slope, where the kindly turf bends toward the river beneath the eye downward, you note the graves and their monuments. Here rest Gen. Samuel Sturgis, Gen. Joseph A. Mower, Col. Berdan, Gens. English, Ord, Brougham, Watkins, Vessey, Mitchell, Van Vleet, McNair, Scott, and others. There are the very first that one may trace to Ireland, to England, to Holland, and to Germany, but they were Americans, these, and for their country gave their lives, and in American soil they sleep their sleep.

Look up from the ranks of the graves a moment! There, through that arch of trees, you note the river, but beyond it, as if set on a hill, there rises the stately dome of the Capitol; the gilded dome of the Library of Congress flames in the reflected sun, and there to the north rises that majestic shaft that has no equal in the world, the Washington Monument! That city over there and what it stands for is what these graves mean! Not a life was wasted!

Here is the Crook monument, one of the most dignified in the cemetery. Here sleeps the great Indian fighter who did so much to clear the West for the march of progress. There rests on the granite tomb a panel of bronze depicting the surrender of the Apache Indians under Chief Geronimo to Gen. Crook in the Sierra Madre Mountains, Mexico, in 1883. We have recently heard from old Geronimo, who has survived his conqueror lies here. In the group on the panel are other officers besides Gen. Crook, Gen. Chaffee for one, and others who are yet living.

**Tombs That Wait.**  
But it is not unusual to find here monuments erected by those who are still in the land of the living. Many old soldiers have done this—preparing for themselves their long last resting place. Here is the monument erected by Gen. Anson Miller, a simple granite block on which is inscribed the date of Gen. Miller's birth; the space for the date of death is left blank, but ready.

Two prominent monuments are those of George Washington Parke Custis and Mary, his wife. A stately oak divides them. Many seamen are buried here, too, and one notes the grave of Admiral Porter, of William Ward Burrows, lieutenant commander of the Marine Corps, and here, by these the grave of Gen. Paul, who had both eyes shot out at the battle of Gettysburg; of Col. Caleb Swan, paymaster general of the army, and many others of note.

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Two prominent monuments are those of George Washington Parke Custis and Mary, his wife. A stately oak divides them. Many seamen are buried here, too, and one notes the grave of Admiral Porter, of William Ward Burrows, lieutenant commander of the Marine Corps, and here, by these the grave of Gen. Paul, who had both eyes shot out at the battle of Gettysburg; of Col. Caleb Swan, paymaster general of the army, and many others of note.

Over to the west you will come upon the graves of eleven Revolutionary officers,

reflected sun, and there to the north rises that majestic shaft that has no equal in the world, the Washington Monument! That city over there and what it stands for is what these graves mean! Not a life was wasted!

Here is the Crook monument, one of the most dignified in the cemetery. Here sleeps the great Indian fighter who did so much to clear the West for the march of progress. There rests on the granite tomb a panel of bronze depicting the surrender of the Apache Indians under Chief Geronimo to Gen. Crook in the Sierra Madre Mountains, Mexico, in 1883. We have recently heard from old Geronimo, who has survived his conqueror lies here. In the group on the panel are other officers besides Gen. Crook, Gen. Chaffee for one, and others who are yet living.

their deeds are known. And it is fitting that here should be implanted another tablet inscribed with the verse:  
Not shall your story be forgot;  
While fame her record keeps,  
Or honor points the hallowed spot  
Where valor proudly sleeps.

Beyond this monument, indeed, there rises the Temple of Fame. It is an open circular colonnade with low, domed roof, and each pillar bears the name of some distinguished officer. These names are Garfield, Meade, McPherson, Sedgewick, Reynolds, Humphrey, and Mansfield. On the entablature there is inscribed these names: Washington, Lincoln, Grant, and Farragut.

There are two other points which are of particular interest to those who love their country. To the south, in the new section of the cemetery, lie the graves of the soldiers who were victims to the Spanish war. They were buried here by order of President McKinley, buried with full military honors, when on that day every department of the Washington was closed. The graves are simple here, but more of them are decorated with flags and flowers than in any other part of the cemetery. The wounds to the living are more recent—there are more survivors still to mourn.

In this same section the most impressive and solemn monument is that made of a huge ship's anchor resting on a granite slab and flanked by two old sailors' caps. The anchor is the remains of the 183 men of the ill-fated Maine and the anchor is the Maine's.

Hard by this section there is another tablet with another of O'Hara's verses:  
We were, no change, nor winter's blight,  
Shall dim one ray of holy light  
That glows your glorious tomb.

These are the show places of Arlington cemetery, the grandest of all the national cemeteries throughout the country, of which there are eighty-three. O'Hara's verses are inscribed on tablets in all of them.

But there is no spot more than another in the most beautiful of all cemeteries that can focus the interest. It is all so impressive, so stately, so magnificent. Well may one remember Tennyson's lines:

One has no such couch as this  
As the green that folds his grave.

**One Hallowed Ground.**

To enter the gates of Arlington is to feel at once that you are on hallowed ground. Above the rapt stillness you may hear the song of birds, upon the velvet turf the bushy-tailed squirrels run in and out at play. Here and there among the trees you shall